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Sir:

Transmitted herewith for filing under 35 U.S.C. 111 and 37. C.F.R. 1.53 is the patent application of:

INVENTOR(S): DEBORAH TATE WELSH

FOR: PET REGISTRATION, SEARCH AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM



Enclosed are:

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2 sheets of drawing(s)

Combined Declaration and Power of Attorney

An Assignment of the invention to together with the recording fee of \$40.00.

A verified statement to establish small entity status under 37 CFR 1.9 and 37 CFR 1.27.

Information Disclosure Statement

The filing fee has been calculated as shown below:

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Applicant or Patentee WELSH, DEBORAH TATE	Attorney's Docket No. 30010
Serial or Patent No:	
File or Issued:	
For: PET REGISTRATION, SEARCH AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM	

**VERIFIED STATEMENT (DECLARATION) CLAIMING SMALL ENTITY STATUS
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Each person, concern or organization to which I have assigned, granted, conveyed, or licensed or am under an obligation under contract or law to assign, grant, convey, or license any rights in the invention is listed below:

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Address		
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*NOTE: Separate verified statements are required from each named person, concern or organization having rights to the invention averring to their status as small entities. (37 CFR 1.27)

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I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code, and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application, any patent issuing thereon, or any patent to which this verified statement is directed.

Name of Inventor DEBORAH TATE WELSH	Name of Inventor	Name of Inventor
Signature of Inventor <i>Deborah Tate Welsh</i>	Signature of Inventor	Signature of Inventor
Date <i>January 14, 2000</i>	Date	Date

PET REGISTRATION, SEARCH AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM

5 BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to pets and methods for reuniting lost pets with their owners. More particularly, the invention relates to a nationwide, web-based pet registration, search, and retrieval system.

10

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRIOR ART

It has been estimated that thousands of pets are lost each year in the U.S. alone. Current methods for reuniting lost pets with their owners are either largely ineffective, too costly or too complicated. For example, one such method requires a pet owner to purchase a personalized pet tag for their pet having the pet owner's name, address, and phone number printed thereon. A person who finds a pet with such a tag can then read the tag and call the pet's owner. This method is effective as long as the information on the tag is current; however, if the pet owner moves and/or changes phone numbers, the pet tags must be replaced with more current tags or else they are useless.

Other methods for locating lost pets include implanting identifying microchips in the pets or tattooing the pets. Both of these methods are expensive and painful for the pets and do not permit a finder of a pet to search for and contact the pet's owner at any time of day. Moreover, with the microchip methods, the finder of the pet must first determine that the pet has an implanted microchip and then locate a veterinarian or other animal facility that has a microchip scanner that can read the implanted microchip.

Several Internet web sites exist that assist in locating lost pets. These sites use a variety of methods such as posting pictures and descriptions of lost pets and information regarding where pets were lost. Unfortunately, the descriptions and information posted on these sites is often too limited and subjective to permit an exact match between a lost pet and its owner. Moreover, pet owners who lose their pets often do not add descriptions of their lost pets to these sites until days after their pets have been lost. If a person finds a pet and accesses one of the sites before the pet owner

adds a description of the lost pet to the site, the finder will be unable to locate the pet owner.

OBJECTS AND SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

5 The present invention solves the above-described problems and provides a distinct advance in the art of lost pet location methods and systems. More particularly, the present invention provides a nationwide, web-based pet registration, search, and retrieval system that is highly effective, inexpensive, and easy to use.

10 The present invention is preferably implemented with a host computer that may be accessed by users via a communications network such as the Internet. Pet owners may register their pets with the host computer by providing information relating to their pets and contact information such as their name, address and phone numbers. This information is then manually or electronically entered into the host computer where it is stored in a searchable database. If the pet owners move and/or change phone
15 numbers, they may contact the host computer at any time and update their contact information.

20 A person who finds a lost pet may access the host computer in an attempt to locate the pet's owner. The host computer prompts the finder to enter certain information relating to the pet and then compares the entered information in the database to the information that was previously entered by the pet owners. If a match is found, the host computer provides the finder with the contact information for the pet owner.

25 In preferred forms, the method of the present invention is used in conjunction with conventional pet vaccination procedures and utilizes a special tag that indicates that a pet is registered with the host computer. Specifically, when a pet owner has his or her pet vaccinated, the veterinarian encourages the pet owner to register their pet with the host computer. The pet owner may do so by manually filling out a form provided by the veterinarian or some other distribution source or by electronically entering the information while on line with the host computer. The entered pet
30 information preferably includes information that is already on a rabies tag that is given to the pet owner after the pet has been vaccinated. The rabies tag information typically includes the veterinarian's name and phone number as well as a series of alpha-numeric digits. The pet owner may also be prompted to provide additional information such as

their name, address, phone numbers, e-mail address, the pet's name, the type of pet (i.e., dog, cat, other), the breed of the pet, and the date the pet was vaccinated. Some or all of this information is then stored in the searchable database described above.

Once a pet owner has registered his or her pet with the host computer, he

5 or she is sent a special tag that is to be worn along with the pet's rabies tag. The tag instructs persons who may find the pet to contact the host computer. The host computer then prompts the person who found the pet to enter information from the rabies tag, including the alpha-numeric digits and the veterinarian's name and phone number. The host computer then compares the information entered by the finder of the pet to the

10 information previously entered by the pet owners to try to find a match. If a match is found, the host computer provides the finder of the pet with the contact information for the owner of the pet so that the finder may contact the owner.

The present invention provides numerous advantages over conventional lost pet location methods. For example, the present invention provides a nationwide, web-based pet registration, search, and retrieval system that may be accessed by anyone, from anywhere, and at any time to locate the owner of a lost pet. The method is highly-effective, inexpensive, and easy to use, and therefore is attractive to all pet owners.

Additionally, because the present invention encourages pet owners to

20 register their pets with the host computer before the pets are lost, a person who finds a lost pet may locate the owner of the pet immediately after the pet is found. Moreover, because the contact information for pet owners is stored on the host computer rather than being printed on a tag worn by the pets, and because pet owners may periodically update the contact information on the host computer if they move and/or change phone

25 numbers, the contact information is always current. Therefore, pet owners do not have to order new pet tags each time their contact information changes.

These and other important aspects of the present invention are described more fully in the detailed description below.

30 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING FIGURES

A preferred embodiment of the present invention is described in detail below with reference to the attached drawing figures, wherein:

Fig. 1 is a schematic diagram of certain computer hardware that may be used to implement a preferred embodiment of the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a flow diagram broadly depicting the steps performed by a pet owner when registering his or her pet with the host computer.

5 Fig. 3 is a flow diagram broadly depicting the steps performed by a person who finds a lost pet in attempting to locate the pet owner.

Fig. 4 is a flow diagram broadly depicting the steps performed by a pet owner who has lost a pet and who has not previously registered their pet with the host computer.

10 Fig. 5 is a flow diagram broadly depicting the steps performed by a pet owner in updating certain pet information stored on or accessible by the host computer.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

Turning now to the drawing figures, and particularly Fig. 1, computer hardware that may be used to implement the method of the present invention is illustrated. Specifically, the invention is preferably implemented with a host computer 10 that is coupled with a plurality of user computers 12 by a communications network 14.

20 The host computer 10 serves as a repository for information provided by pet owners and finders of lost pets and is programmed to perform the functions described below. The host computer may be any computing device such as a network computer running Windows NT, Novell Net Ware, Unix, or other network operating system. The computer program that operates the host computer to perform the method of the present invention may be written in any computer language such as C+ and/or 25 HTML as a matter of design choice.

25 The host computer 10 is preferably connected to another computing device 16 that serves as a firewall to prevent tampering with information stored on or accessible by the host computer and may also be connected with other computing devices such as a computer 18 by a local area network or other network to permit an administrator of the 30 host computer to maintain and monitor the host computer. The host computer preferably includes conventional web hosting operating software and includes an Internet connection such as a modem, DSL converter, or ISDN converter. The host

computer is assigned a domain name such as "awolpet.com" so that it can be accessed via the Internet in a conventional manner.

The user computers 12 may be operated by pet owners while registering their pets and finders of lost pets when attempting to reunite the lost pets with their 5 owners. The user computers may be any type of conventional computing devices including personal computers such as the ones sold by Dell, Compaq, Gateway, or other computer manufacturers. The user computers are networked to the host computer 10 via the communications network 14. The communications network is preferably the Internet, but may also be any other type of network such as a local area network, a wide 10 area network, an Intranet, or even a wireless network. Each user computer preferably includes a conventional Internet connection such as a modem, DSL converter, or ISDN converter and a web browser that permits it to access the Internet and the host computer via the communications network.

The above-described hardware may be used for two primary purposes: 15 (1) to permit pet owners to register their pets with the host computer, and (2) to permit persons who find lost pets to search for and locate the lost pet's owners. The hardware may also be used for other purposes such as to permit pet owners who have lost their pets, but who did not previously register their pets, to post information about their lost pets, and to permit pet owners to update information that they have previously stored 20 in the host computer. These functions and features and others are described in more detail below.

Pet Registration

The pet registration procedure allows pet owners to register their pets with the host computer 10 so that, if the pets become lost, people who find the pets can 25 access the host computer and locate the owners. To encourage widespread use of the present invention and to increase its effectiveness, the pet registration process is preferably performed in connection with conventional pet vaccination procedures.

Specifically, once a pet has been vaccinated, the veterinarian gives the owner a rabies vaccination tag for the pet's collar. Tags are purchased from 30 manufacturers specializing in rabies tags. Each rabies tag lists the veterinarian's name and phone number (address in some instances) and has a unique set of digits, usually four, but sometimes up to seven. Each year the rabies tag color and shape changes. The tags are necessary for proof of vaccinations because most state laws require yearly

rabies vaccinations. The present invention may be used regardless of the time interval of the vaccinations.

The pet registration process may be performed either manually or electronically. For the manual method, a veterinarian or some other distribution source 5 will give a pet owner a form to complete that seeks information about the pet owner, the pet, and the veterinarian. For example, the form preferably seeks contact information for the pet owner including the owner's name, address (optional), phone numbers (mandatory) and e-mail address (optional). The form also seeks pet information including the pet's name, type of pet (dog, cat, other), breed, rabies tag or other license 10 number, rabies tag color and the date, month and year of vaccination (all mandatory) and veterinarian information including the veterinarian's name, address and phone number (all mandatory). The form may also ask how long the vaccination lasts.

Once the pet owner has completed the form, either the veterinarian or the 15 pet owner mails the form to the administrator of the host computer 10 so that the information may be entered. The pet owner may also be required to send a registration fee along with the form. The information is stored, along with information entered by other pet owners, in a searchable database that may be used to locate lost pets as described below. The searchable database may be stored on the host computer or in external memory accessible by the host computer.

Once the information has been entered into the database, the 20 administrator may send the pet owner a confirmation letter confirming that the information has been received and entered into the database. The confirmation letter may also be sent automatically by the host computer 10 via e-mail. The confirmation letter is accompanied by a pet tag to be worn by the pet that states "I am lost. Go to 25 awolpet.com to find my home" or some similar message. The tag is preferably a red square tag that fits next to the pet's existing rabies tag. As more people begin to use the pet registration and searching services of the present invention, the red tags will become so well known that people who find a lost pet and see the tag will easily and quickly recognize that the pet is registered with the host computer.

30 The electronic registration process is similar to the manual process except that the pet owner enters the information from one of the user computers 12 while on line with the host computer 10. Specifically, as depicted in Fig. 2, a pet owner may access the host computer and select an icon from a user interface screen to indicate

that he or she wishes to register a pet as depicted in step 200. The host computer then prompts the pet owner to enter his or her contact information, the pet information, and the veterinarian information as depicted in steps 202, 204, 206. The host computer then posts the information on the searchable database as depicted in step 208 and may

- 5 assign the user an I.D. and a password as depicted in step 210. The user I.D. and password may be used later by the pet owner to gain access to his or her records in the host computer to change the pet information or contact information as described in more detail below. The host computer may also prompt payment for the services by asking for a credit card number as depicted in step 212. The host computer and/or
- 10 administrator then sends a confirmation letter and the pet tag described above as depicted in step 214.

To encourage pet owners to seek regular health exams and necessary vaccination, the method of the present invention preferably requires pet owners to renew their registration either yearly or during some other time interval. The renewal process

- 15 requires a pet owner to complete the pet registration steps either manually or electronically as described above or may merely require entry of information that has changed such as new information on a more current rabies tag. To remind pet owners that they must renew their registration, the host computer 10 may automatically send a reminder notice via e-mail or other means.

20 **Lost Pet Searching**

The lost pet searching procedures of the present invention allow people who find lost pets to access the host computer 10 and search for the owners of the pets. Specifically, as depicted in Fig. 3, a person may access the host computer via one of the user computers 12 and select an icon on the user interface to indicate that they have

- 25 found a lost pet as depicted in step 300. The host computer then asks the person whether the lost pet has a rabies tag or other tag having an assigned set of digits in step 302. If the person indicates yes, the host computer prompts entry of the information on the rabies tag, including the veterinarian's name and phone number or some other licensing institution, the rabies tag number, and the year the rabies tag was issued.

- 30 The host computer 10 then compares the entered information to the information in the searchable database in an attempt to find a match as depicted in step 306. The search criteria may be any part of the information entered by the person who found the pet. For example, the host computer may only search to determine if the

entered rabies tag number matches a rabies tag number in the database or may search based on other entered information. If a match is found, the host computer displays the pet's name as well as the selected contact information for the owner which may include the owner's name and telephone numbers as depicted in steps 308 and 310. If a match

5 is not found, the host computer may recommend that the person contact the veterinarian as depicted in steps 310 and 312 or may proceed to step 314 as described below.

Step 314 prompts the person to enter characteristics of the found pet if no match was found in step 308 or if the pet did not have a rabies tag as depicted in step 302. The pet characteristics may include the type of pet found (i.e., cat, dog, or other),

10 the breed of the pet, the date the pet was found, and the location where the pet was found. The host computer 10 may also prompt the finder of the pet to enter their name and phone number so that they may be contacted by the owner as described below.

The host computer 10 then posts the information entered by the finder on a computer bulletin board or other memory that may be accessed by the computer 12 as depicted in step 316. The host computer may also perform a search to determine if the entered pet characteristics match pet characteristics that have been entered by an owner of a lost pet as described in the following section.

Locating Unregistered Pets

The present invention also permits pet owners to post information regarding lost pets on the host computer 10 even if they did not register the pets before they were lost. Specifically, as depicted in Fig. 4, a pet owner may access the host computer and select an icon indicating that they have lost a pet as depicted in step 400. The host computer then prompts the pet owner to enter characteristics of their pet such as the type of pet (i.e., cat, dog, or other), the breed of the pet, the date the pet was lost,

25 and the location where the pet was lost as depicted in step 402. The host computer then posts this information (step 404) in the same area where the pet characteristics for found pets have been posted as described in step 316 above. This permits both owners of lost pets and finders of lost pets to view the information in this lost pet bulletin board in an attempt to find a lost pet. The host computer may also perform a search as

30 depicted in step 406 in an attempt to find a match between the pet characteristics entered by finders of lost pets and the characteristics entered by the owners of lost pets.

Updating Pet Information

The pet updating procedures of the present invention allow pet owners who have previously registered their pets to periodically update any information that has changed since the last registration. A pet owner may do so by contacting the host computer 10 via one of the user computers 12 and selecting an icon indicating that they wish to update their pet information as depicted in step 500 of Fig. 5. The host computer then prompts the pet owner to enter his or her I.D. and password as depicted in step 502 and then prompts entry of changes to the contact information or pet information as depicted in step 504. The host computer then posts the changes to the appropriate database records as depicted in step 506.

Other Features

The host computer 10 may also be programmed to provide other services. For example, the host computer may be accessed by veterinarians to reorder registration forms or by pet owners who desire to obtain information about the pet registration and search services. Moreover, the user interface screens displayed by the host computer may include information about participating veterinarians. This information may include a list of participating veterinarians by state and city and contact information for the veterinarians. This service encourages veterinarians to support and encourage use of the present invention and assists new pet owners in locating veterinarians in their areas.

The host computer 10 may also permit pet owners to post rewards for the safe return of their pets. Finders of lost pets may then collect these rewards after a lost pet has been reunited with its owner.

Although the invention has been described with reference to the preferred embodiment illustrated in the attached drawing figures, it is noted that equivalents may be employed and substitutions made herein without departing from the scope of the invention as recited in the claims. For example, although the method of the present invention preferably searches for lost pets by using the numbers or digits on existing rabies tags, it may also use other information such as codes or numbers that are assigned to the pets by the host computer or the veterinarians during pet registration. Moreover, although the present invention preferably utilizes a separate tag that is worn by pets to indicate that they are registered with the host computer, this information may

also be printed directly on the pet's existing rabies tags, on the pet's collars, or on a sticker that can be adhered to the pet's rabies tag or collar.

Additionally, although the present invention preferably provides the finder of a lost pet with contact information that allows the finder to contact the pet owner

5 directly, the host computer may also be configured to provide contact information that allows either the pet owner or the finder of the pet to remain anonymous. For example, the host computer may direct the finder of a lost pet to contact the pet's veterinarian rather than the owner and/or the host computer may permit the finder of a pet to remain anonymous when notifying the pet owner that the pet has been found.

10 Having thus described the preferred embodiment of the invention, what is claimed as new and desired to be protected by Letters Patent includes the following:

CLAIMS:

1. A method of locating lost pets comprising the steps of:
prompting pet owners to provide pet information relating to their pets and contact
information for the pet owners;

5 storing the pet information and the contact information in a computer-readable
memory accessible by a host computer;

prompting a person who finds a lost pet to access the host computer via a
communications network and to enter lost pet information relating to the
lost pet;

10 comparing in the host computer the lost pet information entered by the person
who found the pet to the pet information provided by the pet owners in an
attempt to find a match; and

15 if a match is found, providing the person who found the lost pet with the contact
information for the owner of the lost pet.

2. The method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the pet information provided
by the pet owners for each pet includes an assigned set of digits corresponding to the
pet.

20 3. The method as set forth in claim 2, wherein the assigned set of digits
for each pet are printed on a tag that is worn by the pet.

25 4. The method as set forth in claim 3, the lost pet information entered by
the person who found the lost pet including the assigned set of digits on the tag.

25 5. The method as set forth in claim 4, the assigned set of digits including
a rabies tag number printed on a rabies tag.

30 6. The method as set forth in claim 1, the communications network
including the Internet.

7. The method as set forth in claim 1, the pet information being information selected from the group consisting of a veterinarian's name for the pet, the veterinarian's phone number, a licensing agency, a number from a rabies tag for the pet, a year that the pet was vaccinated, an indication of a pet type for the pet, an indication 5 of a breed of the pet, a color of the pet, a date the pet was found, and a location where the pet was found.

8. The method as set forth in claim 1, the contact information being information selected from the group consisting of the pet owner's name, the pet owner's 10 address, the pet owner's telephone number, a veterinarian for the pet, the veterinarian's address, and the veterinarian's phone number.

9. A computer program stored on a computer-readable memory device for operating a computer to aid in locating lost pets, the computer program comprising:

15 a code segment for receiving from pet owners pet information relating to their pets and contact information for the pet owners;
a code segment for storing the pet information and the contact information in computer-readable memory accessible by a host computer;
a code segment for permitting a person who finds a pet to access the host 20 computer via a communications network and to enter lost pet information relating to the lost pet;
a code segment for comparing the lost pet information entered by the person who found the pet to the pet information provided by the pet owners in an attempt to find a match; and
25 a code segment for providing the person who found the lost pet with the contact information for the owner of the lost pet if a match is found.

10. The computer program as set forth in claim 9, wherein the pet information provided by the pet owners for each pet includes an assigned set of digits 30 corresponding to the pet.

11. The computer program as set forth in claim 10, the lost pet information entered by the person who found the lost pet including the assigned set of digits.

12. The computer program as set forth in claim 9, the communications network including the Internet.

13. The computer program as set forth in claim 9, the pet information 5 being information selected from the group consisting of a veterinarian's name for the pet, the veterinarian's phone number, a number from a rabies tag for the pet, a year that the pet was vaccinated, an indication of a pet type for the pet, an indication of a breed of the pet, a color of the pet, a date the pet was found, and a location where the pet was found.

10 14. The computer program as set forth in claim 9, the contact information being information selected from the group consisting of the pet owner's name, the pet owner's address, the pet owner's telephone number, a veterinarian for the pet, the veterinarian's address, and the veterinarian's phone number.

15 15. A host computer accessible via a communications network to aid in locating lost pets, the host computer being programmed to:

receive from pet owners pet information relating to their pets and contact information for the pet owners;

store the pet information and the contact information in computer-readable memory accessible by a host computer;

permit a person who finds a pet to access the host computer via a communications network and to enter lost pet information relating to the lost pet;

25 compare the lost pet information entered by the person who found the pet to the pet information provided by the pet owners in an attempt to find a match; and

provide the person who found the lost pet with the contact information for the owner of the lost pet if a match is found.

30 16. The host computer as set forth in claim 15, wherein the pet information provided by the pet owners for each pet includes an assigned set of digits corresponding to the pet.

17. The host computer as set forth in claim 16, the lost pet information entered by the person who found the lost pet including the assigned set of digits.

18. The host computer as set forth in claim 15, the communications 5 network including the Internet.

19. The host computer as set forth in claim 15, the pet information being information selected from the group consisting of a veterinarian's name for the pet, the veterinarian's phone number, a number from a rabies tag for the pet, a year that the pet 10 was vaccinated, an indication of a pet type for the pet, an indication of a breed of the pet, a color of the pet, a date the pet was found, and a location where the pet was found.

20. The host computer as set forth in claim 15, the contact information being information selected from the group consisting of the pet owner's name, the pet 15 owner's address, the pet owner's telephone number, a veterinarian for the pet, the veterinarian's address, and the veterinarian's phone number.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A nationwide, web-based pet registration, search and retrieval system.

The system is implemented with a host computer (10) that may be accessed by users operating user computers (12) via a communications network (14) such as the Internet.

- 5 Pet owners may register their pets with the host computer and finders of lost pets may search the host computer in an attempt to locate the owners of lost pets.

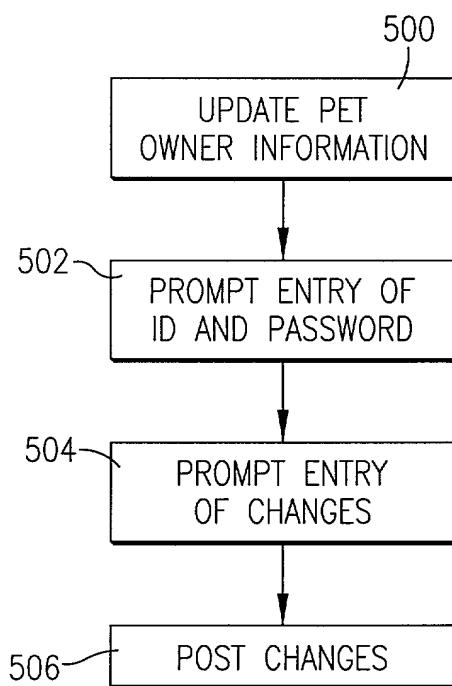
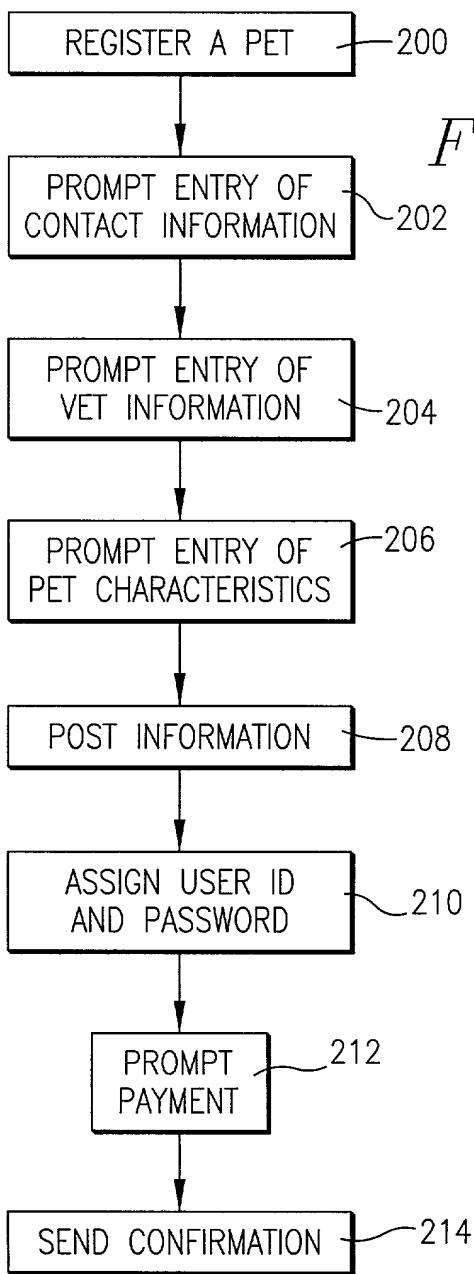
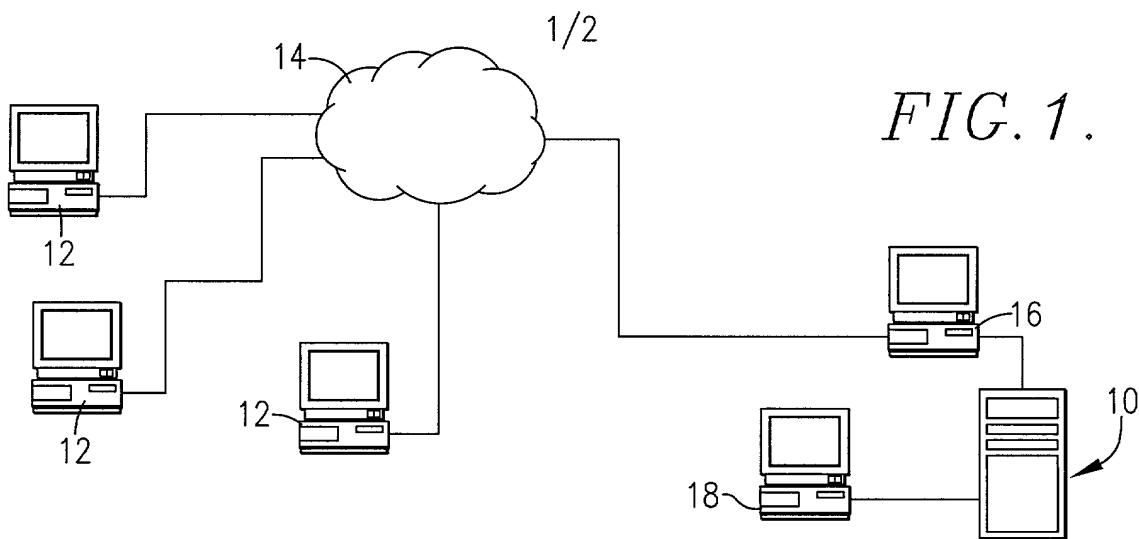


FIG. 3.

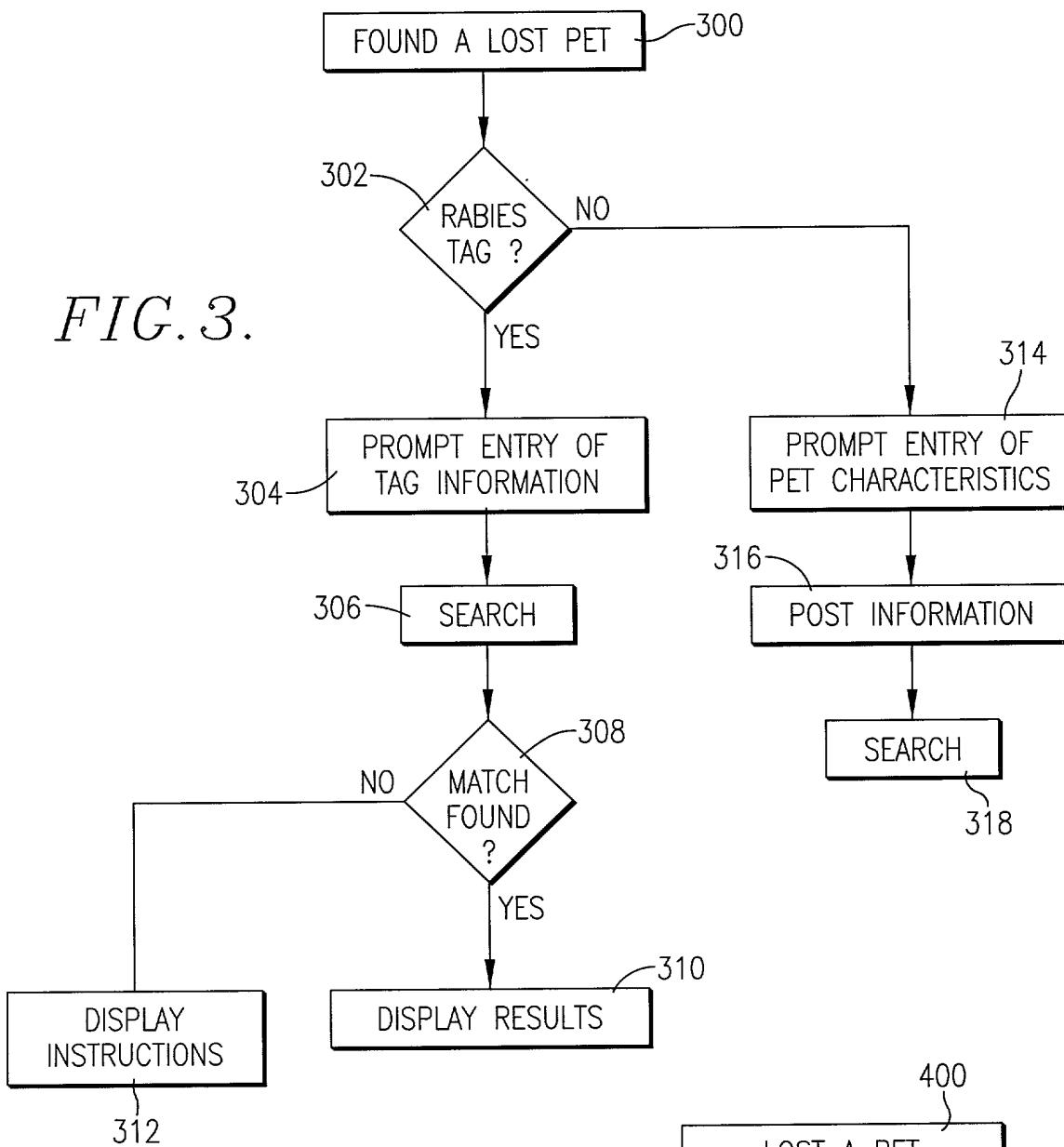
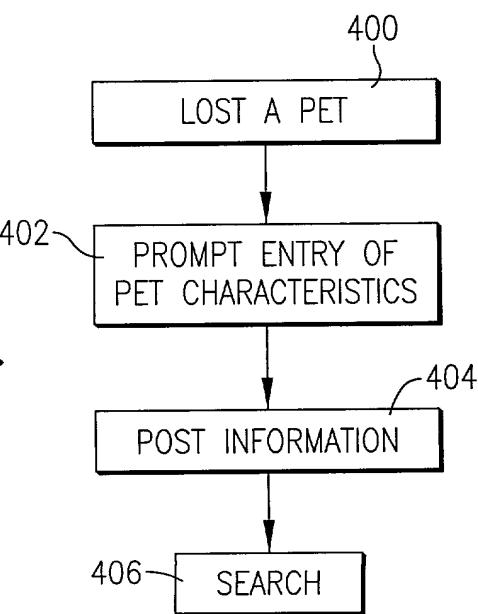


FIG. 4.



COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF ATTORNEY
(Original, Design, National Stage of PCT
or CIP Application)

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NO.
30010

As a below named inventor I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name, I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention entitled:

PET REGISTRATION, SEARCH AND RETRIEVAL SYSTEM

the specification of which: (complete (a), (b) or (c) for type of application)

REGULAR OR DESIGN APPLICATION

(a) [X] is attached hereto.
(b) [] was filed on as Application Serial No. and was amended on _____ (if applicable).

PCT FILED APPLICATION ENTERING NATIONAL PHASE

(c) was described and claimed in International Application No. _____ filed _____
and as amended on _____ (if any).

ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF REVIEW OF PAPERS AND DUTY OF CANDOR

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a).

[] In compliance with this duty there is attached an information disclosure statement. 37 CFR 1.97.

PRIORITY CLAIM

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:
(complete (d) or (e))

(d) [X] no such applications have been filed.
(e) [] such applications have been filed as follows

EARLIEST FOREIGN APPLICATION(S), IF ANY FILED WITHIN 12 MONTHS PRIOR TO SAID APPLICATION

Country	Application No.	Date of Filing	Date of Issue	Priority Claimed
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
				<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO

ALL FOREIGN APPLICATION(S), IF ANY FILED MORE THAN 12 MONTHS PRIOR TO SAID APPLICATION

PROVISIONAL

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 119(e) of any United States application(s) listed below:

Application Serial No.	Filing Date	Status (patented, pending, abandoned)
------------------------	-------------	---------------------------------------

CONTINUATION-IN-PART

(Complete This Part Only If This Is A Continuation-In-Part Application)

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code, § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1.56(a), which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of the continuation-in-part application:

Application Serial No.	Filing Date	Status (patented, pending, abandoned)
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POWER OF ATTORNEY

As a named inventor, I hereby appoint the following attorney(s) to prosecute this application and transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

Robert D. Hovey	19,223	Thomas B. Luebbering	37,874
Warren N. Williams	19,156	Andrew G. Colombo	40,565
Stephen D. Timmons	26,513	Tracy L. Bornman	42,347
John M. Collins	26,262	Tracey S. Truitt	43,205
Thomas H. Van Hoozer	32,761	Susan M. Myers	40,743

SEND CORRESPONDENCE TO:

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(816) 474-9050

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

Full name of sole or first inventor	DEBORAH TATE WELSH		
Inventor's Signature	<i>Deborah Tate Welsh</i>		
Date	January 14, 2000	Country of Citizenship	United States of America
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Full name of second joint inventor, if any			
Inventor's Signature			
Date			
Residence			
Post Office Address			